

# QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT

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**DATE:** April 8, 2004

**STREAMLINING**

**PROJECT:** Evaluation of Wildlife Crossing Structures on US Highway 93 Evaro to Polson—Phase 1: Pre-construction data collection and finalization of evaluation

**START DATE:** March 1, 2002

**EXPECTED**

**COMPLETION DATE:** June 30, 2006

**FUNDING LEVEL:** \$562,500 (including 20% match from Montana Department of Transportation)

**ANTICIPATED**

**PRODUCTS:**

- Memo to Technical Design Committee on monitoring design considerations (completed May 2002)
- Animal-vehicle collision database (50% complete)
- Field Methods and Safety Protocol Handbook (85% complete)
- Summary of literature and existing data (50% complete)
- Memo defining the Measures of Effectiveness (75% complete)
- Long-term Research and Monitoring Evaluation Plan (50% complete)
- Phase 1 Pre-construction Case Study (30% complete)
- Pre-construction field data summary report (30% complete)

**MEASURABLE**

**RESULTS:**

(i.e. how did the project advance environmental streamlining)

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**PLEASE PROVIDE THE STATUS OF ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS (E.G., PROJECT MILESTONES, DELIVERABLES, PRODUCT DISSEMINATION, RELEVANT DIVISION ACTIVITIES) FOR THE PROJECT IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACE(S) BELOW.**

### THIRD REPORTING PERIOD (01/01/04-03/31/04)

Division Contact: Bob Seliskar

Funding Spent-to-Date: \$422,245.59

Funding Balance Remaining: \$140,254.41

#### ***On-going Activities***

- Literature search and compilation of relevant data.
- Discussions on research issues and direction with MDT research manager and district biologist, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) tribal biologist, Montana State University and University of Montana (UM) Ecology/Wildlife Departments and GIS center, Salish Kootenai College (SKC), and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).
- Attendance of US 93 Technical Design Committee meetings to document decision-making process for wildlife crossings and fencing design issues for case study.
- Mentoring Whisper Maillet, WTI Graduate Fellow supported in cooperation with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), with her study plan for her thesis research on US 93 deer crossings and deer-vehicle mortalities.

#### ***January 2004***

- Presented report on effects of reducing wildlife fencing to TDC; fielded numerous comments and revised report for February TDC meeting.
- Gathering literature on Measures of Effectiveness.
- Merging chapters for Field Methods Handbook
- Attended Accelerated Construction Technology Transfer workshop for US 93. Served as expert on environmental issues group.

#### ***February 2004***

- Finished revisions and additional literature search on effects of reducing wildlife fencing; distributed revised report to TDC.
  - NOTE: the previous quarterly report implied the final report for the entire study was available—to clarify, this was referring to the availability of this report on the effects of reducing fencing, not the final preconstruction monitoring project report (this will be available in 2006).
  - NOTE: WTI fulfilled this request made by the TDC to compile the fencing report despite the fact that this was beyond the scope that we are currently contracted under. The report will be included in the case study report on the progress of the TDC.
- Gathering literature on Measures of Effectiveness.
- Working on Field Methods Handbook.

#### ***March 2004***

- Continued discussions on design of fencing and mitigating the ends and gaps in the fence at access points.
- Sent out survey to MDT, FHWA, and CSKT stakeholders asking their subjective opinions on how to define “effectiveness” for the US 93 wildlife crossing structures.

- Gathering literature on Measures of Effectiveness.
- Working on Field Methods Handbook.
- Searching for field technician help for summer
- Searching for resources to do tracking bed maintenance (weed control, tilling, fabric and sand replacement)

### ***Summary***

Bear study has completed field studies and is now in analysis and write-up. Road-kill data collection, tracking bed data collection protocols are all in place as are databases and quality assurance/quality control systems. All protocols are being documented in the Field Methods Handbook. WTI re-evaluated the amount and variability of the tracking bed data in to draft Measure of Effectiveness. Both the Field Methods Handbook and Measures of Effectiveness report are currently being drafted and these drafts will be distributed for review by the end of March. We addressed comments from the Technical Design Committee regarding the report on the effects of reducing wildlife fencing as they relate to the goals of the mitigation and evaluation study. We revised the report and resubmitted this to the US 93 Technical Design Committee . WTI continued to serve as a resource for questions regarding fencing and mitigation at gaps.